

WP2: Critique of Public Science Writing

Length: 5 pgs. double spaced

Grade percentage: 20%

Important dates:

Tuesday, October 18, introduce project

Thursday, October 27, peer workshop one

Tuesday, November 1, peer workshop two

Thursday, November 3, submit final version

Description:

One way to better understand your academic writing (which you explored in project one) is to compare it to science writing aimed at public audiences. For this second project, you will select a scientific discovery or finding and analyze the differences between its presentation in academic text vs. mass media. The point of this project is to understand and critique how writing changes across different genres and audiences.

Your job for this project is to locate a popular or non-technical report of a scientific finding, discovery, or announcement. Then find the corresponding academic journal article, compare the two presentations, and draw conclusions about the differences you observe in these various discourses.

Your ultimate goal is to answer: How—and more importantly *why*—does academic discourse differ from more popular discourse? You may present your findings as a traditional academic paper (organized logically as you choose) or in a more nontraditional presentation that you believe better suits your subject matter and audience.

Purpose:

- To understand how writers construct texts persuasively (or not)
- To understand how readers construct meaning(s) from texts
- To understand what it means to say that knowledge is constructed
- To understand the concept of the rhetorical situation and be able to apply it to writing and reading situations
- To evaluate changes in language between discourses as intentional decisions

An "A" paper...

- Supports claims with ample examples from both texts with consistent in-text citations and corresponding references
- Compares claims and conclusions between both texts
- Points to specific shifts in genre, statement type, and stases (based on Fahnestock's article)
- Is logically organized with clear structure
- Uses strong topic sentences and clearly transitions from idea to idea
- Uses Times New Roman 12-pt. font with 1" margins
- Identifies specific passages that would connect with the various audiences they seek to address